

USDA – Rural Development Programs

Funding Resources (energy specific)

Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Loans & Grants (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-energy-america-program-renewable-energy-systems-energy-efficiency>)

Provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements.

Funds may be used for renewable energy systems, such as:

- Biomass (for example: biodiesel and ethanol, anaerobic digesters, and solid fuels)
- Geothermal for electric generation or direct use
- Hydropower below 30 megawatts
- Hydrogen
- Small and large wind generation
- Small and large solar generation
- Ocean (tidal, current, thermal) generation

Funds may also be used for the purchase, installation and construction of energy efficiency improvements, such as:

- High efficiency heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVAC)
- Insulation
- Lighting
- Cooling or refrigeration units
- Doors and windows
- Electric, solar or gravity pumps for sprinkler pivots
- Switching from a diesel to electric irrigation motor
- Replacement of energy-inefficient equipment

Rural Energy for America Program Energy Audit & Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grants (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-energy-america-program-energy-audit-renewable-energy-development-assistance>)

Grantees assist rural small businesses and agricultural producers by conducting and promoting energy audits, and providing renewable energy development assistance (REDA).

The assistance must be provided to agricultural producers and rural small businesses. Rural small businesses must be [located in eligible rural areas](#). This restriction does not apply to agricultural producers. Assistance provided must consist of:

- Energy audits.
- Renewable energy technical assistance
- Renewable energy site assessments

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Loan Program (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/energy-efficiency-and-conservation-loan-program>)

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Loan Program (EECLP) provides loans to finance energy efficiency and conservation projects for commercial, industrial, and residential consumers. With the EECLP, eligible utilities, including existing Rural Utilities Service borrowers can borrow money tied to Treasury rates of interest and re-lend the money to develop new and diverse energy service products within their service territories. For instance, borrowers could set up on-bill financing programs whereby customers in their service territories implement energy efficiency measures behind the meter and repay the loan to the distribution utility through their electric bills.

The EECLP allows borrowers to design their EE Programs. While RUS does not establish specific energy efficiency program designs, the program does require that funding be used to:

- Improve energy efficiency and/or reduce peak demand on the customer side of the meter;
- Modify the electric load such that there is a reduction in overall system demand;
- Stimulate a more efficient use of existing electric facilities;
- Attract new business and create jobs in rural communities by investing in energy efficiency, and/or
- Encourage the use of renewable energy fuels for demand-side management or to reduce the use of fossil fuel use within a service territory.

High Energy Cost Grant program (RUS) - Assists retail or power supply providers, tribes cooperatives and state and local governments in lowering energy costs for areas with extremely high per-household energy costs (275 percent of the national average or higher.)

Advanced Biofuel Payment Program (RBS) - Support and ensure an expanding production of advanced biofuels by paying advanced biofuel producers for finished advanced biofuel products

Repowering Assistance Program (RBS) - Provides funding for up to 50% of the total eligible project costs for biorefineries to install renewable biomass systems for heating and power at their facilities; or, to produce new energy from renewable biomass

Energy Resource Conservation - The Energy Resource Conservation (ERC) Program enables current Rural Utilities Service (RUS) borrowers to make funds available to their consumers for energy conservation and renewable energy projects by deferring payment of principal and interest.

Funding Resources (capacity/community/business development)

Community Facilities loan and grant (RHS) - This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial or business undertakings.

B&I Loan Guarantee (RBS) - This program bolsters the existing private credit structure through the guaranteeing of loans for rural businesses, allowing private lenders to extend more

credit than they would typically be able to.

Rural Business Development Grants

(www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants)

Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-economic-development-loan-grant-program>) - small businesses (REDL REDG) can be used for technical assistance

Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-microentrepreneur-assistance-program>) - small businesses

Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-cooperative-development-grant-program>) - cooperatives

Strategic Economic and Community Development (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/strategic-economic-and-community-development>)

Rural Community Development Initiative Grants (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>) - community facilities

Economic Impact Initiative Grants (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/economic-impact-initiative-grants>) - community facilities

Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-technical-assistance-and-training-grant>) - communities

Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/mutual-self-help-housing-technical-assistance-grants>) - Housing: Provides grants to qualified organizations to help them carry out local self-help housing construction projects, • Tech Assistance to recruit families, help them complete loan applications and carry out other related activities that enable them to participate.

Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/socially-disadvantaged-groups-grant>) - small businesses and communities